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98-141

April 13, 1998

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

"MOLECULES IN SPACE" TOPIC OF LECTURE AT EIU

CHARLESTON -- Helene R. Dickel, a professor of astronomy, will discuss "Molecules in Space" during a lecture Thursday on Eastern Illinois University's campus.

Specifically, she will talk about gas and dust clouds in the Milky Way and methods used to investigate their composition. Clumps of these clouds collapse to form the next generation of stars.

The lecture is designed for a general audience and has been termed "lively and interesting" by those who have previously heard it. The talk will begin at 7:30 p.m. in Phipps Lecture Hall, Physical Sciences Building, with an informal reception preceding it at 7 p.m. Admission is free and open to the public.

Dickel, who is currently a research professor at the University of Illinois, received her bachelor's degree in mathematics from Mount Holyoke College and her doctorate in astronomy from the U of I. She has been successful in making some of the first images

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of molecules in outer space with the Westerbork Synthesis Radio Telescope in the Netherlands and the Very Large Array of Radio Telescopes of the National Radio Astronomy Observatory.

She has held visiting positions in Sydney, Australia; the Netherlands; and the Los Alamos Laboratory in New Mexico. She and her astronomer husband, John, are "Faculty Friends" to a group of undergraduate students at the U of I and have, for the past 20 years, hosted January term student interns in astronomy from Mt. Holyoke, Wheaton, Oberlin and Carroll colleges.